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Hanford Group, Inc.

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Geoff Tyree/509-372-1145
E-mail: Geoffrey_T_Tyree@rl.gov

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**Simulated waste tank will speed Hanford cleanup**

RICHLAND, Wash.—Hanford officials are preparing a newly completed test facility that includes a large simulated waste tank for demonstrations of tank cleanup equipment.

The Hanford Cold Test Facility will be a key player in the effort to clean up millions of gallons of highly radioactive and hazardous waste stored in 177 large underground tanks within a few miles of the Columbia River.

Equipment needed to retrieve tank waste and send it to a planned treatment plant will be demonstrated and developed at the facility north of Richland.

The centerpiece of the facility is a 75-foot diameter, open-top, steel tank. The tank is the same width as a real one million gallon Hanford tank. A superstructure spans the tank, with platforms at 35 feet and 55 feet, simulating the heights of single-shell and double-shell tanks.

"This facility will increase our confidence when cleanup equipment and work moves into the field," said Joe Cruz, retrieval engineer for the Department of Energy's Office of River Protection. "It will reduce the possibility of issues arising when we use the equipment for the first time in a real Hanford tank."

"This facility will help us make sure we know the safest and best way to put cleanup equipment into Hanford tanks," said Joel Eacker, vice president of projects for CH2M HILL Hanford Group. "Familiarity with the equipment will increase our operators' knowledge and safety, while reducing costs and allowing us to complete work more efficiently."

The facility will be capable of staging up to 600,000 gallons of simulated waste for cleanup demonstrations. The environmentally friendly simulated waste will include sand, clay, soluble salts, and liquids containing sodium nitrate. These are similar to the three basic types of Hanford tank waste: sludge, salt cake, and supernatant liquid.

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The Cold Test Facility covers nearly 10 acres near Hanford's existing HAMMER training facility. Construction of the Cold Test Facility began in November 2001 and will be complete this month. The facility was designed and built for $2.4 million by Los Alamos Technical Associates and local contract team members Thompson Mechanical Constructors, and Mid-Columbia Engineering.

The facility is expected to be ready for equipment development and testing this summer. Those activities will include demonstrating single-shell tank retrieval equipment, tank waste mixer and transfer pumps, and sampling equipment.

CH2M HILL Hanford Group Inc. is DOE's Office of River Protection prime contractor with responsibility for storing, characterizing, and retrieving for treatment approximately 53 million gallons of highly radioactive and hazardous waste stored in 177 underground tanks.

An employee-owned company, CH2M HILL was founded in 1946, and today serves clients on six continents with engineering, construction, and operations services for environmental, energy, water, transportation, and industrial infrastructure.

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ADDRESS: MSIN: H6-04, P.O. BOX 1500, RICHLAND, WA 99352-1505 PHONE: 509-372-1139